

11 AUG 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)

SUBJECT: Resumption of Article Drops for Propaganda Purposes
in the Balkans

REFERENCE: Top Secret Memo dtd 18 Apr 1952, to DDCI, from ADPG;
same subject. TS 68870

1. The desirability of resuming propaganda supply drops of useful articles, including food, has been under constant review since reference memorandum was written, and it is now believed that there is sufficient evidence to indicate that it would be desirable to reinstitute this article drop program without further delay.

2. The problem can be broken down into three elements which are:

- (a) British propaganda supply drops (largely non-edible supplies).
- (b) U.S. propaganda supply drops involving food.
- (c) U.S. propaganda supply drops involving useful, but non-edible, articles.

3. The first question to be resolved is Item (a) above, namely, British article drops. At the time the propaganda supply drop ban was imposed upon our Balkan operations, the British, whose Albanian operations are closely coordinated with our own, accepted our suggestion out of deference to our feelings and postponed a propaganda supply drop which had been scheduled in June. Although the British acceded to our suggestion, they have pointed out that the Foreign Office has imposed no comparable ban on their activities and that they do not agree with our reasoning for suspending this type of operation. They further emphasized that, in their view, such suspension would not only suggest a tacit admission on our part that the Albanian charges of poisoned food drops were correct, but would also amount to doing what the Albanian authorities would like us to do, namely, stop the drops. It was the British view that the propaganda value of such operations is potentially very considerable, and that because of this fact and in view of the considerable expense to which they have gone in preparing for such operations, they would like to have us withdraw our suggestion to them, leaving them free to continue operations if we are hesitant about doing so ourselves. The British further explained at a recent conference in London that, in their opinion, the Communist authorities in Albania were capable of and probably would announce the dropping of packages of germ laden materials whether drops of any kind were actually being made or not, depending on the current Communist evaluation of the usefulness of such propaganda.

4. A recent message received from the British in London, again expressed the hope that the American ban on article drops would soon be

82215

TOP SECRET

COPY 5 OF 2 Copies
lifted as the

CLASSIFICATION REVIEW DIVISION
DOWN GRADE PER
FOR DDO JAN 1960

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHUEN EXEMPTION 3828
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISSEMINATION ACT
10002 JAW
0002 JAW

lifted as the British are anxious to resume these operations in August and the RAF are ready to fly the missions.

5. The second question to be resolved is Item (b), para. 2, namely, the resumption of the U.S. propaganda supply drops involving food. Reports received from the field covering the debriefing of agents who have exfiltrated from Albania, and from the interrogation of refugees are all to the effect that the Albanian populace places no credence in the accusations made by the Hoxha Government that the food dropped contained poison. These reports indicate that the people received a very substantial morale boost from the drops in spite of the fact that the Government immediately instituted measures to confiscate all packages. Furthermore, in the case of food drops, possible charges that the food is poisoned can be forestalled, as was done in the case of the drops already carried out, by the inclusion of suitable leaflets warning the finder that, out of spite, his own Communist government may have poisoned the articles, and consequently he should use extreme caution until he is sure that such is not the case.

6. With reference to the third question, i.e. to drops consisting exclusively of non-edible items, it would be difficult for the Communist authorities to claim that such articles are poisoned, although they could undoubtedly make accusations of bacterial contamination. Consequently, it could be said that in a sense such article drops would lend themselves less well than food drops to possible propaganda exploitation by the enemy.

7. In view of our first hand reports and of British views on the success of this type of operation, as well as the ineffectiveness of the charges by the Hoxha Government, which were foreseen and discounted from the start, it is requested that the ban on propaganda supply drops of both inedible articles and food be lifted immediately in order to permit us to inform the British in time to allow them to carry out their planned article drop in August, and to allow planning preparations to proceed for further U.S. operations.

(Signed)

Acting Assistant Director
for Policy Coordination

SE/PC-GMY-awn
23 July 1952

Distribution:

DD/P - #1, 2
ADPC - #3
C/SE - #4
SE/PC-1 - #5
SE/PC - #6
RI/TS - #7

TOP SECRET

82215

5 7